तव कथामृतं तप्तजीवनम्
tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam

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Special Radhastami Issue

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Don't Imitate Radharani

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

When one becomes an *uttama-adhikārī, mahā-bhāgavata*, he does not see anyone as a demon. He sees, "Everyone is worshiping Krishna. Only I am not worshiping." This is *mahā-bhāgavata*. Just like Radharani, she always feels that, "I do not know how to love Krishna. Oh, here is a *gopī*. How she loves Krishna!" This is called *mahā-bhāva*. So we should not imitate Radharani. Just like Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, he is the symbol of Radharani's *mahā-bhāva*. He says, "I do not love Krishna. I do not know how to love Krishna."

If you cry and somebody asks, "Why are you crying?"

"Well, it is a show. I am making a show of crying."

A truly qualified devotee will instead answer, "If I would have loved Krishna, then being without him I would have died long, long ago. The fact that I am still living without Krishna means I do not love Krishna." This is *mahā-bhāgavata-bhāva*, separation.

> *āśliṣya vā pāda-ratāṁ pinaṣṭu mām*
> *adarśanān marma-hatāṁ karotu vā*
> *yathā tathā vā vidadhātu lampaṭo*
> *mat-prāṇa-nāthas tu sa eva nāparaḥ*

Lord Krishna, who is the lover of many devotees (women), may embrace this fully surrendered maidservant or may trample me with his feet, or he may render me brokenhearted by not being present before me for a long duration of time, but still he is nothing less than the absolute lord of my heart.

This is *mahā-bhāgavata*. We should not imitate such a person, but also we should not remain a *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī*. We must come to the *madhyama-adhikārī*, middle stage. These stages will gradually manifest if we simply try to develop our attachment for Krishna.

— From a lecture Ahmedhabad. 13 December 1970.

Let Radha Appear in Our Hearts

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada

Let that personification of supreme magnanimity, Srimati Radharani, who is always eager to collect the mercy of the Supreme Lord on behalf of all living entities, appear in our hearts and make her presence known. Let her appearance be our object of worship. If we worship the one who is Govinda's own wealth, the one who makes him wealthy, the one who is everything to Govinda, then we will understand what worship is. If after reading the 18,000 verses of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* we do not come to know about her, then our reading was in vain.

next column ☞

If by some unknown *sukṛti* we get the association of those who are close to Sri Vrishabhanu-nandini (Srimati Radharani), if we are fortunate enough to hear about Her, then we can get the inspiration to proceed towards our supremely beneficial goal. She is everything to the son of Nanda, who is the reservoir of all ecstasy, and we will never attain devotional service to Govinda without serving her and her servitors. ❁

— From a lecture on *Rādhāṣṭamī* day in 1931 at the Saraswat Natmandir of the Sri Gaudiya Math. Excerpted from *Prabhupada Saraswati Thakur.* Mandala Publishing Group. Eugene, Oregon. 1997. Pages 99–100.

Krishna's Debt to the Gopis

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

The *gopīs* have given up everything while being devoid of even the thought that Krishna is *svayam-bhagavān*, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. They only know that Kanu, the son of Nanda Maharaja of Vrajabhumi, is their most beloved, their life, and their object of love — *prema-sarvāśraya*. He is their everything. With that *prema* they have given up everything. In the literature of the world you will never find such *tyāga*, such renunciation. It is incomparable. By their love, Krishna's promise was broken. His promise is, *ye yathā māṁ prapadyante tāṁs tathaiva bhajāmy aham* — "As someone approaches me I reciprocate accordingly."[*Bg.* 4.11] Krishna never becomes indebted. He always repays his debts. But this promise of his was broken by the *gopīs*. Because the *gopīs* don't want anything, how will he repay them? If they have some intention, some desire, then Krishna could have repaid them. But the *gopīs* don't want anything. Therefore His promise is broken. The *gopīs* don't want *svarga-sukha, bhukti-sukha, mukti-sukha, siddhi-sukha*, or *sevā-sukha* — heavenly enjoyment, material enjoyment, the happiness of liberation, the happiness of mystic perfections, or the happiness of service. They don't want anything. So what will Krishna give them? How will He repay them? Because they don't want anything, Krishna's promise — *ye yathā māṁ prapadyante tāṁs tathaiva bhajāmy aham* — had been broken.

Three Reasons

There are three reasons why Krishna's promise was broken. The first reason is because the *gopīs* don't want anything for themselves. They are not interested in *ātmā-sukha*, their own happiness and enjoyment. So Krishna has nothing to give them.

The second reason is that they only have one desire, to please and give happiness to Krishna. They have no other desire. They only have desire for the pleasure and happiness of Krishna. When one wants to give all pleasure and happiness to Krishna, what does he or she have to do? One has to give up ones own happiness. When someone gives everything, then the one who accepts becomes indebted. Then how will he pay them back?

The third reason is that the *gopīs* attention is single-pointed, only on Krishna. On the other hand, Krishna's attention is multi-pointed. Because Krishna is the reservoir of all mellows, He reciprocates appropriately with all types of *bhaktas — śānta, dāsya, sakhya, vātsalya*, and *mādhurya* — and therefore his attention is multi-pointed. But the *gopīs* are single-pointed. Therefore Krishna's promise, *ye yathā māṁ prapadyante tāṁs tathaiva bhajāmy aham,* is broken when He sees the love of the *gopīs*. He has said, *na pāraye 'haṁ* [*Bhāg.* 10.32.22] — "I have become completely indebted to you. I cannot pay you back, because you don't want anything. What shall I do?" To pay back his debt he became Gaura, assuming the mood of Radharani. Now he is paying back that debt by crying, crying, crying for Krishna, as Radharani is crying and feeling acute pangs of separation from Krishna. This is Gaura. He is Krishna, but the feeling, the mood, is exactly like that of Radharani. As Radharani is crying, crying, crying, and drowning herself in this unfathomable ocean of separation, similarly, Gaura is burning himself with the fire of separation from Krishna. He is always crying and crying and talking like a madman, just as Radharani was crying and talking like a madwoman. The symptoms of madness in Gaura and Radharani are exactly the same. That is why Mahaprabhu relished the songs of Vidyapati, Chandidas and Jayadev in the association of Raya Ramananda and Swarup Damodar Goswami.

I don't know if there are any *bhaktas* here who can relish this thing. One who is in bodily consciousness cannot relish this, cannot understand it. It will never touch them. Prabhupada has written here in this purport [*Cc. ādi* 13.42] that unless you go above bodily consciousness how can you understand and relish it?

Questions

Devotee #1: The *gopīs* are completely free from bodily consciousness, how can we become like that? I'm a conditioned soul. I'm not a...

Gour Govinda Swami: Develop your love for Krishna and then you'll become free from the conditional stage. Put Krishna on the platform of love. Why are you putting your body and bodily relations on the platform of love? Give up that thing. Give up all lusty material desires. You have so many lusty desires. Give them up for Krishna. How are the *gopīs* acting? How are the *gopīs* busy, day and night? *kāma-kṛṣṇārpaṇa* — Be as lusty as the *gopīs*. The *gopīs* are lusty to give all pleasure and enjoyment to Krishna. They don't want anything for themselves. Although the *gopīs* are in a dying condition, burning in the fire of separation, still they are not dying. Radharani said, "Because He has made us taste that nectar mellow, our bodies have become deathless. But still we are feeling the pain of death."

How is it that they are feeling the pain of death but not dying?

"If someone dies, then his or her pain is finished. But when we are dying, death doesn't come to us. Our bodies have become deathless because He has made us taste, *adhara-sudhā*, the nectar of His lips. *tapta-ikṣu-carvaṇa* — It is like chewing very hot sugarcane. The mouth is burning, but one cannot give it up."

Such is their condition. This is love for Krishna. This is His mercy. This is the test of how much you love Krishna: You feel yourself in a dying, painful condition, but still you cannot give up Krishna. By this separation the love survives and grows. If there were always union, then love would have met an untimely death. *Viraha*, separation, makes the love survive. Therefore Krishna puts them in this ocean of *viraha*. That is Krishna's mercy. He puts the *gopīs* and Radharani in the ocean of *viraha*. Thereby the love survives and grows.

Devotee #2: It seems like a contradiction. On the one hand Srila Prabhupada is saying in his purport [*Cc. ādi* 13.42] that the materialists should not read about Krishna's pastimes with the *gopīs*. Then on the other hand Prabhupada also says that if one has sex desire then by reading about the *rāsa-līlā* pastimes they will become free from lust.

Gour Govinda Swami: Lust is the disease of the heart. The *Bhāgavatam* states, *kāmaṁ hṛd-rogam āśv apahinoty* — by hearing *rādhā-kṛṣṇa-prema-līlā* from the right source, from the lips of a *vaiṣṇava* who is on the platform of love and who is always feeling the *gopī's bhāva* of separation from Krishna, it will act as a medicine. [*Bhag.* 10.33.39]

Devotee #2: So Srila Prabhupada's statement in the purport is referring to someone who is not hearing from a *vaiṣṇava* but is only reading?

Gour Govinda Swami: Yes. Then one will get the reverse effect. He will imitate and become a debauchee, and then there will be social scandals.

Devotee #2: So the key is that one should hear from the lips.

Gour Govinda Swami: Yes, hear from lips. If you only read, you cannot understand. Hear from the right source. And if you are on that level then you can understand. Then you can relish this subject. Otherwise you cannot understand such topics because they are not material.

Devotee #2: What if the guru tells you to read these subjects?

Gour Govinda Swami: Why will the guru say that? The guru knows what level the disciple is on. He will debar you, "Don't read." No. You cannot understand. If you read, only the reverse effect will come and you will imitate. You will think, 'Oh, Krishna is doing like this, or the *gopīs* are doing like this. Let me also do that.' There is no question of imitation. That won't help you. When you become elevated to that level then spontaneity has come. It comes by the association of *sādhus*. By the *sādhus'* mercy you may be elevated to that level. Otherwise there is no other means. The mercy of such *sādhus*, *vaiṣṇavas*, is required."

— Excerpted from *Mathura Meets Vrindavan*. Gopal Jiu Publications. Bhubaneswar, Orissa. 2003. Pages 207-209, 236-237.

All Brijbasis Chant "Radhe Radhe"

There is a saying in the *vrajabāsī* language, *ḍāra ḍāra aura pāta pāta pai śrī rādhe rādhe hoya* — What to speak of active living entities, even every branch and leaf of the trees chants, "Radhe! Radhe!"

— *Vaiṣṇava Kaṇṭha-hāra*. By Sri Krishna Balaram Swami. Prabhupada Institute of Culture. Baltimore, MD. 1988. Page 181.

Mahaprabhu Observes Radhastami in the Home of Pundarik Vidyanidhi

Srila Narahari Chakravati Thakur's
Śrī Bhakti-ratnākara 12.3178-3213

One day, with a smile, the son of Mother Saci told Pundarika Vidyanidhi Prabhu, "Tomorrow we shall observe the birthday ceremony of Sri Radhika in your house." Vidyanidhi was overjoyed hearing this news. He rushed to his house to arrange everything for the festival. The next day, Prabhu came to the house of Vidyanidhi with his associates and followers, sat down in their midst, and performed the *janma-abhiṣeka*, bathing ceremony of Sri Radhika on her birthday. What can I say about the emotions Mahaprabhu exhibited at that time?

āju gorācāṅda gaṇa-saha gopaveśe
tile tile adhika vibhola se nā rase

Today, Gaurachandra in the dress of a cowherd boy, accompanied by his associates, gradually became completely overwhelmed with loving mellows.

hāse laha laha cāhe gadādhara pāne
vahaye ānanda vārī dhārā du' nayane

The son of Saci laughed, moved to and fro, and looked towards Gadadhar while tears of ecstasy streamed from his two eyes.

mukunda mādhava vāsu ullāsa hiyāya
rādhikā janama carita sabhe gāya

Greatly delighted, Mukunda, Madhava and Vasu sing the pastimes of Radhika's birth.

bāje khola karatāla bhuvana-maṅgala
nāce paṅhu dharaṇī karaye ṭalamala

The sounds of the *mṛdaṅga* and *karatālas* made the whole world auspicious, while the dancing of myriad feet made the earth tremble.

gaurīdāsa ādi nāce bhāra kari' kāndhe
dekhite se gopa-veśa kebā thira bāndhe

Gauridas and others dance while carrying pots on their shoulders. Seeing their cowherd dress, who can sit quietly?

kata sāthe nāce puṇḍarīka vidyānidhi
chaḍāiyā navanī haladī dudha dadhi

Among them, Pundarik Vidyanidhi dances and snatches away butter, turmeric, milk and yogurt.

nitāi advaita śrīvāsādi raṅga dekhi'
bhāse sukha samudre phirāte nāre āṅkhi

Those who saw the joking pastimes of Nitai, Adwaita, Srivas and the others floated on the ocean of happiness and couldn't take their eyes away.

kī nārī puruṣa dhāya ei raṅga dekhite
dāṇḍāiyā aṅgane cāhaye cāribhite

Whether woman or man, everyone ran to see these pastimes, standing inside the courtyard.

dekhi' goparūpera mādhurī anupama
keha kahe, — 'nāce i'ki kanakera kāma'

Seeing the cowherd boy's form full of matchless sweetness, someone said, "What is this dancing golden treasure?"

deva-gaṇa nācaye kusuma vṛṣṭhi kari'
jaya jaya diyā raṅge nāce narahari

The demigods dance and rain down flowers. Saying, "All glories! All glories!" Narahari dances in sheer delight.

— Translated from the Gaudiya Mission edition. Bagbazar, Calcutta. 1987.

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